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## The Afghan Refugees: An Irritant to Soviet- Pakistani Relations

An Intelligence Memo

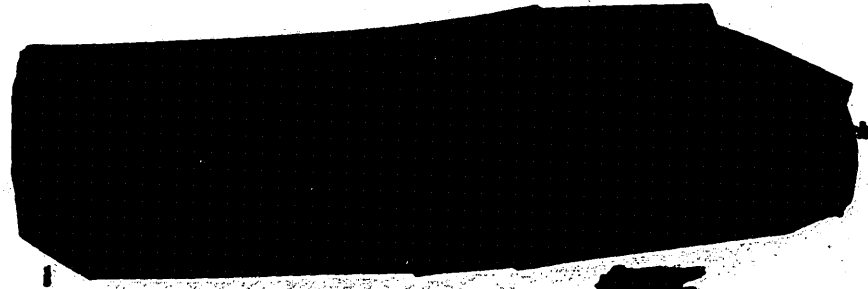
**The Afghan Refugees:  
An Irritant to Soviet-  
Pakistani Relations (c)**

**Summary**



More than 700,000 Afghan refugees are located in the border areas of Pakistan; most eventually register with government agencies in order to establish eligibility for relief supplies, and about 650,000 are already registered in camps ranging in size from 500 to 11,000. Almost all the refugees are Pushtun tribesmen. (U)

Cross-border tribal ties, combined with the tendency to travel in extended family units, have enabled the refugees to survive until now without much government support. The need, however, for food, shelter, and sanitation systems is growing. (U)





## The Numbers

By current best estimate, more than 700,000 Afghan refugees are located in the border areas of Pakistan, from Chitral in the north as far south and west as Dalbandin in Baluchistan Province. Most are in the North-West Frontier Province; fewer than 110,000 are in Baluchistan. The number in the northern areas has increased as refugees from the current military operations make their way to Pakistan. Most of them entered Bajaur District and Mohmand tribal territory. If Soviet antiguerrilla operations continue to expand, the refugee totals in Pakistan could approach more than 1 million by May or June. (U)

Most of the refugee influx occurred during the last six months. A trickle of refugees began to flow toward Pakistan in May 1978. The number of registered refugees in camps increased from approximately 18,000 in January 1979 to 153,000 in September 1979, then doubled to 390,000 by January 1980. Many uncounted Afghans have been absorbed into tribes in Pakistan related to their own. (U)

Currently, there are 53 loose concentrations of refugees, which in a broad sense can be considered camps. Of these, 23 are in the North-West Frontier Province and 30 in Baluchistan. The size of these encampments ranges from 500 to 11,000; the number fluctuates as refugees move in and out. Most of the refugees not in camps are in the North-West Frontier Province. Many of these are clustered in groups of three to eight families, encamped wherever water is available. Scarcity of water and forage in the arid border zone limits the size of encampments and dictates periodic moves. (U)

## Composition of Refugee Groups

No clear pattern on the composition of the refugee groups emerges.

The ratio of men to women is high in some camps, low in others. The camps with comparatively large percentages of males are in Pishin and Zhob Districts in Baluchistan. One of the largest of the refugees camps, with 11,000 people near Loralai, for example, is 38-percent male, 31-percent female, and 31-percent children. At another encampment in Baluchistan, a group of 300 Hazara males—ages 18 to 35—arrived without women and children, saying that the trip would have been too arduous for them. They are seeking weapons, not food and shelter. (U)

Cross-border tribal ties, combined with the tendency to travel in extended family units, have enabled the refugees to survive without much government support. The need, however, for food, shelter, and sanitation systems is great. Most refugees eventually register with government agencies in order to establish eligibility for relief supplies, including UN aid administered by the Pakistani Government. (U)

Some clearly are not refugees in the normal meaning of the term. In determining refugee status, the Pakistani Government is systematically excluding *kuchis*, the nomads who annually migrate from the mountains in Afghanistan into the warmer valleys in Pakistan during the winter. Trying to justify their registration as refugees and thus their eligibility for government largesse, the *kuchis* say that although they arrived as usual last fall, they do not plan to return to Afghanistan this spring because of unsettled conditions there. Most of the *kuchis* are Ghilzais and are concentrated in Baluchistan and in the Gomal and Tochi River Valleys in Waziristan. (U)

Almost all the 700,000 refugees—*kuchi* and nonnomadic alike—are Pushtuns. In the Peshawar Valley and to the north, they are mostly members of the Safi, Mohmand, Shinwari, and Khugiani tribes; in the Kurram and Waziristan areas, they are principally Jajis, Mangals, Jadrans, Waziris, Mahsuds, and Ghilzais. Most of the refugees in Baluchistan are from seminomadic Durrani tribes. Pushtuns who arrived from urban areas in Afghanistan flocked to Peshawar, the center of refugee activity, and to Quetta; the minority who could afford it moved on to Western Europe and the United States. Those from rural villages are scattered along—and are generally close to—the border. It is these rural Pushtun tribesmen, with warrior traditions and a conservative Islamic outlook, who make up the most inflexible and active opposition to Communist rule. (U)